

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Duties

Incumbent serves as an Animal Health Technician, performing technical and specialized work in relation to the cattle fever tick eradication program. Incumbent is also called upon to inspect animals for scabies or screwworm infestation and for other conditions of particular interest to the State or agency. Assignments are characterized by requirements for: knowledge of the program activities and responsibilities; experience involving the use of judgment in the application and response interpretation of broad rules in order to recommend or determine courses of action; and skill in using tact and diplomacy in contacts with farmers, ranchers, truckers, livestock exporters and importers, state and Federal officials, law enforcement officials, and private veterinarians.

Characteristic duties are as follows:

The incumbent patrols an assigned sector of the tick quarantine zone along the Texas-Mexico border and adjacent free area for the purpose of locating and inspecting livestock which might be carrying cattle fever ticks, other exotic ticks, scabies mites, screwworm, or other foreign animal diseases. The patrol includes trailing, apprehension, and inspection of livestock to determine if they are Mexico strays or native livestock of undetermined origin; apprehension and inspection of livestock smuggled from Mexico to evade inspection and/or payment of custom duty; and systematic inspection of livestock native to the sector.

The incumbent makes periodic inspections of premises in and bordering the quarantine zone and investigates additions to or losses of livestock from such herds; makes periodic inspections of vacated premises in an effort to detect bad fences, cattle tracks, or other evidence of illegal use of the premises; rides and checks all fences in and bordering the quarantine zone to ascertain that they are adequate to prevent intermingling of livestock and consequent exposure to fever tick carriers. Substantiating facts on bad fences are gathered for use as a basis for issuing quarantine notices.

Incumbent collects and tentatively identifies all ticks according to genus, species, stage in life cycle, sex, and sexual maturity, evaluates and determines the possibilities of exposure to other livestock or premises and recommends a course of action to the supervisor. All tick, screwworm, and scabies mite specimens are forwarded to the state office through the supervisor. Livestock are processed in accordance with regulations.

Incumbent oversees the systematic dipping of livestock in accordance with tick eradication rules, regulations, and procedures. This duty includes inspecting and maintaining holding pens and dipping vats located strategically throughout the quarantine zone; mixing and testing dipping solutions.; recommending dipping notices when required; filing complaints with appropriate authorities; notifying livestock owners of dipping locations and dates.

Makes inspections at auction markets and sale barns to determine that animals moving out of the area are free from fever ticks and have been processed in accordance with regulations.

Supplements Animal Inspection and Quarantine Program force in processing animals being presented for import and assists in inspection and treating of such animals.

Other Considerations

In order to adequately perform these duties, the incumbent will have contacts with Mexican nationals and local members of the livestock industry that require the use of tact and diplomacy. A basic understanding of the Spanish language is very helpful in these situations.

In instances where stray or smuggled livestock have been apprehended, there is the possibility the incumbent will be subject to attack. In anticipation of such events, supervisors may authorize employees to carry firearms for self protection. Incumbent will have to receive training and qualify in the use of firearms, and demonstrate the ability to show sound judgment to avoid legal actions against themselves and the government. Incumbent will have to requalify annually in firearms use or be reassigned to a position not requiring the firearms qualifications.

The incumbent must have previous work experience in the cattle industry, and be able to trail, rope, and handle wild livestock.

The physical demands consist of riding horseback in rough country for long periods, apprehending livestock, chopping trail, crawling through low brush, regularly lifting bulky items in excess of 100 pounds, working outdoors in extreme weather conditions ranging from below freezing in winter to over 100 degrees in the summer.

Incumbent should be able and available to travel for response to any emergency APHIS operation involving livestock and poultry health needs.

C. Supervision Received

Incumbent works in a remote location and must plan his/her own work and act independently when the occasion requires. Incumbent reports any problems to a Supervisory Animal Health Technician, who reviews the work through frequent visits and through an evaluation of records and reports. The supervisor may ride an patrol with the incumbent to observe the work in progress and to provide training in techniques, procedures, and regulations. Unusual conditions, discovery of smuggled or stray cattle, and findings of disease or infestation are reported immediately to the supervisor by telephone or radio. The incumbent is guided by oral and written performance standards, rules, and regulations of the Texas Animal Health Commission, CFR Part 72, pertinent details of Federal-State Brucellosis and Screwworm regulations, and regulations governing interstate and international movement of livestock and poultry.